

## APPENDIX I

### Standard Operating Procedures

#### 41 Lands

1. Review all withdrawn lands for either retention or revocation as per the public laws. Withdrawal review will be completed by 10/21/91 as required by the public land laws. After review, recommend either revocation or retention of the withdrawal, consistent with land use plans of the Winnemucca District
2. Prior to disposal of long term commitment of public lands, review them for agricultural potential. "Lands found to be valuable for public purposes will be considered chiefly valuable for public purposes (43 CFR 2430.2(b))." This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis by the District Manager.
3. Review all proposed disposals of public lands and retain any needed legal access to the remaining public lands.
4. Check boundaries of all expanding subdivisions and of isolated dwellings for encroachment onto public lands and take action as necessary.
5. Check utility lines, roads, communication sites, sanitary landfills, etc. for unauthorized use. If unauthorized uses are found, either authorize or abate them.

#### .42 Minerals

1. The following steps should be employed in eliminating hazards related to mining activities.
  - a. Identification of hazardous adits, shafts, tunnels, structures, and wastes.
  - b. Investigate ownership status of the hazardous site to determine responsibility for hazard reduction.
  - c. If mine workings are both accessible and safe, map the workings for geologic and hazards information.
  - d. Determine the best methods of hazard reduction (i.e. closure of adit or tunnel entries filling or fencing of shafts, contouring of waste piles, signing, etc.).
  - e. Publish in local newspaper for three consecutive weeks, location(s) and type(s) of hazardous condition(s) to be eliminated.
  - f. Eliminate hazards after legal notification.

Note: Due to scarce manpower and funds, Area Managers will have to determine which hazards should be eliminated and to what extent.

2. No activity that disturbs bedrock material or unconsolidated materials will be permitted in areas with known significant paleontological resources until a paleontological clearance has been conducted.

.43 Forest Products

1. Where mountain mahogany stands are adjacent to streams, heavy equipment and fire retardant will not be used. In other mountain mahogany stands, the use of fire retardant and heavy equipment will be used with caution and only with the approval of the Area Manager or resource advisor.

.44 Range Management - Wild Horses and Burros

1. As feasible and practical all waters that are available to wild horses and burros and cattle will remain available yearlong for wild horse and burro use.

Develop a water distribution system that is suited for horse use and compatible with wildlife use. All new water developments within HUAs will be required to apply this system. Exceptions may be negotiated on a case-by-case basis (e.g. deep wells requiring pump jacks and certain windmills outside of the livestock grazing season-of-use).

2. License domestic horses and burros only in those areas where such domestic animals would not be expected to mix with populations of wild horses and/or burros.

.45 Soil-Water-Air

1. Disposal recommendations within flood-prone areas will consider the implication of disposal as it is related to potential flooding and flood damage. Use of such disposed lands should avoid development which could risk significant loss of property or life.
2. Consider rehabilitating areas which have had protective vegetative cover destroyed by wildfire, flood, or mechanical disturbance. For wildfires, treatment should be initiated on the ground within 90 days of the fire. For others, action should begin as soon as possible after the event. Utilize seeding and other watershed stabilization techniques as required. Seed mixture should include native perennial grasses and/or exotic species which have previously been introduced into the ecosystem. Rehabilitation must be protected from grazing until adequate seedling establishment has been attained. A minimum of two years is normally required for seedling establishment.

3. Prevent any surface disturbing action or other management action which would result in the destruction of existing populations of federally listed or state listed endangered, threatened, or sensitive plant or any plant proposed for such status. Establish the locations of occurrence of plants of particular importance as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.
4. Prevent Bureau and Bureau-authorized activities from degrading air quality beyond established standards as specified in the Nevada Ambient Air Quality Standards.

.46 Wildlife-Aquatic Wildlife

1. Protect sage grouse strutting grounds and give proper consideration to other sage grouse habitat by accepting as guidance Nevada Department of Wildlife's Guidelines For Vegetal Control Programs In Sage Grouse Habitat In Nevada. Nevada Department of Wildlife must be given a minimum of two years notice of any proposed large-scale vegetal manipulations in order that they might inventory the area for sage grouse use and thus provide appropriate input.

In addition, sage grouse strutting grounds and associated use areas must be given similar consideration and protection in the planning and permitting of other types of projects and uses (fences, pipelines, roads, gravel pits, rock gathering, powerline rights-of-way, land exchanges, mining, mineral leasing, etc.).

2. Provide water for wildlife at existing water sources by adhering to multiple use principles in the maintenance, use, and development of water sources on public land. This will be done by:
  - a. Developing only those water sources absolutely essential for meeting management objectives;
  - b. leaving water at the source of all water developments;
  - c. leaving pipelines operational in all years and in all seasons except where weather damage may occur;
  4. providing wildlife water outlets along pipelines at regular intervals where feasible;
  5. providing water at ground level at all troughs where feasible;
  6. installing escape ramps in all troughs;
  7. piping excess water at each trough into a fenced enclosure where feasible;
  8. not allowing diversion of water sources for other uses.

Exceptions may be negotiated on a case-by-case basis (e.g. deep wells requiring pump jacks and certain windmills outside of the grazing season-of-use).

3. Coordinate the development of new Habitat Management Plans (HMP) and revision of existing deficient ones, so that completion coincides or precedes completion of their companion Allotment Management Plans (AMP).
4. When carrying out large-scale crested wheatgrass seedings or herbicidal spray projects, wildlife areas to be given special consideration include, but are not limited to:

Big game concentration areas;

Big game wintering grounds;

Sage grouse habitat (follow NDOW Guidelines);

Riparian and wetland habitat;

Meadows;

Mountain browse vegetative types;

Raptor concentration areas, especially winter use areas.

Mitigating measures include, but are not limited to:

Leaving islands of undisturbed brush within manipulated areas;

Leaving strips of undisturbed brush along draws and gullies;

Leaving a buffer strip of undisturbed brush around meadows and water sources;

Making no disturbed area wider than 1/4 mile;

Disturbing any large areas in wide strips or irregular blocks;

Reseeding with seed mixtures containing desirable wildlife forage species;

Carefully considering the management scheme for vegetative manipulations in order not to produce pest havens.

5. Modify existing fences on public lands to minimize conflicts with wildlife.
6. Initiate any necessary fire rehabilitation measures immediately after suppression of fires affecting significant areas of important wildlife habitat. Significance and/or importance will be determined by the Area Manager, in consultation with the District and Area Wildlife Biologists.

Rehabilitation will be accomplished as outlined in BLM Draft Manual 7441, or its successors, and will include, but not be limited to the following:

Waterbarring of fire control lines;

Closure to livestock and/or wild horse use (allotment or pasture closure, or protective fencing);

Reseeding of burned areas (using native plant seed, if possible).

All rehabilitation projects will be fully coordinated with the range and Soil-Water-Air programs.

7. The District's Fire Management Plan will include provisions for conducting prescribed burns for the benefit of wildlife habitat.
8. All powerline rights-of-way granted in the future within raptor areas in the district will contain stipulations requiring that powerline support structures be designed to minimize the possibility of bird electrocution from contacting two or more wires simultaneously, or a hot wire and ground simultaneously. In addition, where feasible and possible, such rights-of-way will not be permitted within 400 yards of roads. This will minimize shooting of raptors perching on power poles.  
  
Where possible, this recommendation also applies to existing rights-of-way when power companies apply for permits to modify existing lines. This standard operating procedure is not designed to limit access during the construction phase.
9. Protect from unnecessary disturbance or destruction all raptor nest sites that are presently active or which are known to have been active in the last five years.
10. Critical wildlife habitat will be retained in public ownership.
11. Exotic fish species will not be introduced into the water of the Winnemucca District except through specific agreements between BLM and NDOW and only after extensive analysis through the environmental assessment system. No exotic species will be introduced into those drainages containing endangered, threatened, or potentially threatened species. Mahogany Creek contains the Lahontan cutthroat trout which has been identified as a threatened species (URA). Warm springs in the Soldier Meadows basin contain the Soldier Meadows desert dace which have been proposed as an endangered species.
12. Fire lines will not be constructed by heavy equipment on riparian stream zones and fire retardant will not be applied to water.
13. Roads adjacent to all district streams will be water barred to prevent erosion.

.47 Recreation-Cultural Resources-Wilderness

1. Prior to disposal of public lands, the recreational value of the proposed parcel should be analyzed. Those parcels determined to have high recreation value should not be disposed of except to other public ownership under suitable recreation and public purpose disposals.
2. A visual contrast rating will be completed on all projects where there will be surface disturbance. The contrast rating will be included with the environmental assessment or categorical exclusion.
3. As manpower and funds are available, establish regular patrol of cultural resources, seeking to apprehend vandals who conduct illegal excavation or vandalism, and monitor activities of surface collectors.
4. By 1983 check all developed water sources for cultural resources. By 1988 modify those developments which are resulting in serious impacts.
5. Determine sources of deterioration and priorities for preservation through field checks of all cultural resource sites.
6. Complete an intensive (Class III) cultural resources survey prior to any activity which will result in new surface disturbance or transfer of land from public ownership.
7. Obtain data needed to fully assess significance of all archeological and historical resources. This should be accomplished under area level Cultural Resource Management Plans, and will be fully coordinated with all other activity plans for the area.
8. All Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) will be managed in accordance with the Interim Management Policy and Guidelines For Lands Under Wilderness Review (IMP) of December 12, 1979.